

MUSIC.

SOME OBSERVATIONS AFTER THE FACT.

The coming of Antonin Dvorak to be director of one of New York's musical schools has been looked upon generally by writers for the newspaper press as an occurrence of more than ordinary interest. Mr. Dvorak's music is as familiar to our concert-goers as that of any living composer, and it is much liked. It was therefore natural that all our musicians, professional and amateur, should have taken a great interest in the concert arranged to introduce him to the American public, and have listened to the new compositions which he brought forward with more than ordinary enthusiasm. That the artistic features of the concert were somewhat disappointing has already been intimated in this journal, and it is only Justice and the eminent musician that a careful statement be made of the causes of that disappointment. Of course the fact that Mr. Dvorak is temporarily a resident of New York City neither adds to nor subtracts an inch from his artistic stature. As a soloist a propria in sight not to be set down without an apology were it not for the fact that the provincialism which had an exposition in the circumstances attending his local introduction is so pervasive among Anglo-Saxon souls that the last number of a London musical journal of dignity and excellent standing fault was found with the writer of the sketch of Dvorak which appeared recently in "The Century Magazine" because he had not said that the present fame of the Bohemian composer was due to the appreciation of his genius by the English people. The case merits notice for two reasons: first, because, though England has contributed a great deal to the world's prosperity of Dvorak, it is not true, as is implied in the criticism, that he is an English discovery; and second, because we believe it to be incontestable that the influence of his English popularity has been anything but beneficial to the composer. It will be no reflection upon New York if, while recalling the respect and admiration for Mr. Dvorak that his genius challenges, it nevertheless insists upon judging his works as frankly, dispassionately, impartially and intelligently now as it did before any one conceived the idea of bringing him as a teacher to our shores, in the matter of music New York long ago outgrew its swaddling clothes and it can give domicile to any composer without losing its equanimity or surrendering its artistic conscience. We believe that Mr. Dvorak has discovered more that so far as the musicians and the real music-lovers of New York are concerned he has placed himself in a field which merits his most earnest and best efforts, and that he will not think that anything or nothing will serve his ends simply because the management of the Music school with which he has connected himself has seen fit to advertise itself and him in a manner that he would not consider dignified in Austria, Germany or France. We do not consider it worth while to discuss the tact, the taste, the wisdom or the propriety of the business methods of Mr. Dvorak's employers; be and his music are more interesting subjects.

Mr. Dvorak will probably not have such a class in composition as he would like to have and as we should be glad to see under his tuition, but he will be a potent influence in American music study.

There is a splendid stimulus in his music, and the story of his life is full of encouragement to the young composer. Is he a good model? The question is of the highest importance. We have long been talking of an American School of Composers. Critics who follow conventions in thought have denied that the elements for such a school exist. They note the characteristics of the so-called National Schools of Europe, which are based on the folk-tunes of the peoples of Europe, and set these down as the necessary foundations of a school. They cannot find aboriginal peculiarities of rhythm or melody here and so conclude that there can be no American School of Music. The view is needlessly narrow. A school is not necessarily a school of composition, but it may be a school of musical education. Mr. Dvorak has undoubtedly given us a good model. His music is full of encouragement to the young composer without losing its equanimity or surrendering its artistic conscience. We believe that Mr. Dvorak has discovered more that so far as the musicians and the real music-lovers of New York are concerned he has placed himself in a field which merits his most earnest and best efforts, and that he will not think that anything or nothing will serve his ends simply because the management of the Music school with which he has connected himself has seen fit to advertise itself and him in a manner that he would not consider dignified in Austria, Germany or France. We do not consider it worth while to discuss the tact, the taste, the wisdom or the propriety of the business methods of Mr. Dvorak's employers; be and his music are more interesting subjects.

DAVID J. DENNING.

Edwin J. Denning, of the great drygoods firm of E. J. Denning & Co., died suddenly from heart failure on Saturday evening at his home, No. 3 East Ninth-st. To all appearances he was in perfect health just before his death, and for many years he had scarcely missed a day from his business. On Saturday evening, after the stars had been closed, he went home and dined with his family, as was his custom. Later in the evening he took a walk up Fifth-ave., while he smoked a cigar, in the company of his son, Stewart Denning. When he returned home he complained of a pain in his back, and said that he felt weary. His son rubbed his back for him, and then, after talking for a while, Mr. Denning went into his bathroom. He had scarcely entered when he fell on the floor and died. Although his heart was somewhat weak, he never complained of being troubled by it, and his physician did not think there was any fear that Mr. Denning would die from heart trouble.

Mr. Denning was born in Ireland about fifty-two years ago. He came to this country when a boy and was employed in the store of A. T. Stewart, and has been in the business ever since and advanced rapidly by step by step until he became the sole member of the firm some years after the death of Mr. Stewart.

Nearly all of Mr. Denning's time was devoted to business, and he was not a member of any active club.

He died in the Union League Club, held at the First Presbyterian Church, Fifth-ave. and Eleventh-st., tomorrow at 1 p. m. The burial will be in Woodlawn.

DAVID TERHUNE.

David Terhune, one of the most popular citizens of Hackensack, died at his home, in that city, Saturday night of pneumonia. He was sick only three days. He was seventy years old, and had lived in Hackensack for eight years. For thirty years he was a trustee of the Washington High School and had held other high places. He served as president of the Improvement Commission for six years, and was a governor of the Hackensack Hospital. Two years ago he retired from the lumber business. He leaves a wife, a son and daughter.

RALPH SMITH TAINTON.

Ralph Smith Tainton died last Saturday at his home, in Celeste, Conn., from complications resulting from a fall which occurred several weeks ago. Mr. Tainton was born in Colchester in 1812, and there he spent the whole of his long life, except eight years. He devoted most of his life to the cultivation of the farm, although he had been prominently active in the politics of his native state and county. Mr. Tainton was the father of Police Justice Charles N. Tainton, of this city. In 1857 he was elected state senator from his district and has held a number of minor political offices. He has also been at several different times one of the selectmen of Colchester.

Mr. Tainton was a member of several agricultural societies of New London County and a member of the Congregational Church of his native town, and was a graduate from Union Academy, one of the oldest schools in Eastern Connecticut. Several weeks ago he fell and sustained a fracture of the hip joint, which compelled him to remain at home. His health prior to the accident had been remarkably good for one of his advanced age, but he began to decline rapidly soon after the fall and died from some internal complications or embolism in his hips. Mr. Tainton leaves seven children, five sons and two daughters. The funeral will be at the Celeste Church tomorrow at 1 p. m.—The burial will be in the family plot in Linwood Cemetery, Colchester.

CHARLES L. HARRIS.

Chicago, Oct. 23.—Charles L. Harris, the well-known actor, recently of A. M. Palmer's company, at St. Luke's Hospital yesterday. He had been ill since Sept. 27.

Charles L. Harris, although in many respects a remarkably fine actor, had been scarcely known in this city till within the last two years. He was born in New Orleans about forty years ago. He had been on the stage a long time, and had won an enviable reputation as an artist in many of the smaller theatres of the country before he attracted the attention of the New York public in "Rehearsal Temple," a play written for Maurice Barrymore and produced at the Standard Theatre early in the autumn of 1890. This play was a failure, and Mr. Barrymore, starring in it, had to leave the stage. The burlesque, James Gilkes, a comic star from building, sixty hands, increase paid in wages 30 per cent; increase in business 18 per cent. Daniel K. Brown, Brooklyn, roofing materials, 165 hands, increase paid in wages 35 per cent; increase in business 100 per cent. Joseph Richards, Port Gran, N. J., mining iron ore, 400 hands, 10 per cent; increase paid for labor; 25 per cent increase in business. James Gilkes, a comic star from building, sixty hands, 5 per cent increase for labor.

The Canistota Cutlery Works, of Canistota, N. Y., makers of pocket knives, 60 hands. Their expenditure in wages increased 30 per cent, and their business 10 per cent. Hamm & Co., of New York, the famous shoe manufacturers, have 450 hands at work, and increased their pay for labor's per cent.

Herrick & Argentor of Albany, making of felt bags and machine stoves, 100 employees, paid 30 per cent more for labor, and their business increased 60 per cent while the price of goods was reduced 10 per cent. F. Peck & Co., of Orange Valley, N. J., soft felt hats, 125 hands, 30-13 per cent; Minnette Shade and Cloth Co., Minnette, N. Y., window shades, rollers, 300-320 hands, 30 per cent; A. P. McRae, Metrawville, N. Y., corsets, 400, 30 per cent; Alfred L. Roy, Cohoes, N. Y., knit goods, 285, 33-13 per cent; Fairbank & Co., Paterson, N. J., broad silks, 365 per cent; the Chen-Ton Company, Washington Mills, N. Y., agricultural implements, 50, 33-13 per cent; Hall & C. stamping, Harrison, N. J., castings, leather leather, 265 per cent; J. P. Miller, Pittston, N. J., which made leather in castings, have 200 employees; they pay 200 per cent more for labor under the McKinley Act, and have increased their capacity 300 per cent. L. L. Allen Brothers, Rochester, N. Y., men's flannels, 50 hands, 10 per cent increase in the labor account, despite having to compete with vast importations made four years ago in anticipation of the tariff. The Overland Harness Company, Cortland, 100 hands, 5 per cent. Columbia Foundry, N. Y., 25 hands, 33-13 per cent. F. Merriam, Syria sugar-sugar, soap and bladders, 150 hands, 10 per cent. Woodcock & Co., of Oneida, machine tools, 20, 20 per cent. Peerless Dye Works, Elmira, 20, 10 per cent; E. Vandoeuvre, Troy, boxes and planing mill, 75, 15 per cent; Minnette Shade and Cloth Co., Minnette, N. Y., window shades, rollers, 300-320 hands, 30 per cent; A. P. McRae, Metrawville, N. Y., corsets, 400, 30 per cent; Alfred L. Roy, Cohoes, N. Y., knit goods, 285, 33-13 per cent; Fairbank & Co., Paterson, N. J., broad silks, 365 per cent; Hall & C. stamping, Harrison, N. J., castings, leather leather, 265 per cent; J. P. Miller, Pittston, N. J., which made leather in castings, have 200 employees; they pay 200 per cent more for labor under the McKinley Act, and have increased their capacity 300 per cent. L. L. Allen Brothers, Rochester, N. Y., men's flannels, 50 hands, 10 per cent increase in the labor account, despite having to compete with vast importations made four years ago in anticipation of the tariff.

Benedict—SHIRWOOD.—Troy.—Presto Inn, 100 hands, 5 per cent. May's, Brooklyn, 100 hands, 5 per cent. Hudson & Co., of Carterville, Ill., 100 hands, 5 per cent. Squire Tucker, at one time one of the most popular actors in America, who has given entire rights to the popular music of the Czechs. He has borrowed the songs and they have become popular in his proclamations because of his marvellous skill in that art. The question is whether, after the performance of "Alphonse Capriccioso," so far as we could judge by the hearing simply because he reciprocates in the second and third some of the material of the first we may be compelled to compare the two performances deserving to be compared with either of the symphonies, the overture mentioned by his brilliant "Schöner Capriccioso." Moreover, even in the workmanship, there was exhibited a want of originality which is not to be found in the performances of these pieces one after the other emphasized certain numbers which bore evidence too plainly in favor of the proposition suggested at the outset of this discussion, that the pieces with the exception of "Alphonse Capriccioso" had not been written to order. He has acquired a fatal facility in composition, and like Rudinthal, seems unable sometimes to stay his hand when he has only plaudities to utter.

In the "Duke of Roxburghe" there was much greater force and impressiveness of thought than in the other works, in spite of its bizarre first number and the use of devices already made familiar by "Regum." Here again the thorough artistic method and accurate knowledge of southern music brought him into distinct success.

It is a clear-cut composition, however, which has not been able to stand up to comparison with "Alphonse Capriccioso," so far as we could judge by the hearing simply because he reciprocates in the second and third some of the material of the first we may be compelled to compare the two performances deserving to be compared with either of the symphonies, the overture mentioned by his brilliant "Schöner Capriccioso." Moreover, even in the workmanship, there was exhibited a want of originality which is not to be found in the performances of these pieces one after the other emphasized certain numbers which bore evidence too plainly in favor of the proposition suggested at the outset of this discussion, that the pieces with the exception of "Alphonse Capriccioso" had not been written to order. He has acquired a fatal facility in composition, and like Rudinthal, seems unable sometimes to stay his hand when he has only plaudities to utter.

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